ALBERTA FOLKLORE QUARTERLY

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Alberta Folklore Quarterly is published by the University of Alberta under the supervision of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project. The magazine aims to print authentic first hand accounts interpretative of the region and its people; to encourage the collection and preservation of the traditional materials of Alberta; and to help foster a literature indigenous to this part of the Canadian West.

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THE COVER

Our cover was designed by Colin Low, a first year student at the Art School, Provincial Institute of Technology, Calgary. Low, who is only 19 years old, was raised on a ranch near Kimball in Southern Alberta. He has made it possible to have an art education by working for the past two summers at the Mental Hospital, Ponoka.

According to Low's teacher, H. G. Glyde, A.R.C.A., he has an unusual artistic talent. We believe that young Mr. Low is in good hands, for both Mr. Glyde and his colleague at the Art School, W. J. Phillips, R.C.A., are leading interpreters of the western Canadian scene.

"The opening was just big enough for me to get my hands through, so I grabbed the tails of two of those wolves. They set out at a great rate with Baldy's frozen corpse and me bouncing along behind.

"The weather was clear so I steered them toward the ranch by pulling back on one tail, then on the other. I guided them right into the yard. There I let go and started to yell like the dickens. My hired man came arunnin' and when he caught his breath got busy and hacked me out."

I still think it's the climate.

. . . . . .

In this issue we publish a few stories about Bob Edwards. Bob is pleasantly remembered for many things, but very few critics have as yet evaluated his proper place in the literary history of the West. We believe that when the critics finally make a close examination of the western traditions they'll be climbing over each other to get a look at our little file of the Eye Opener.

Among other things Bob was responsible for the creation of a legendary western character: Peter J. McGonigle. Peter J. was supposedly editor of the purely fictitious Midnapore Gazette, a hardy little sheet edited by a many-sided individual; for McGonigle naturally had interest other than publishing. These

interest included any kind of liquor, horsestealing, politics, religion, high society, and numerous other social and anti-social activities.

In looking through the Eye Opener file, we note a few good exploits of this folk tale hero. We add these references trusting that some wide-awake critic will take the hint and examine Peter J. McGonigle.

July 13, 1907 - McGonigle refuses to take drinks and cigars as subscriptions to the Gazette.

June 27, 1908 - McGonigle elected secretary of the Bible and Boozological Society.

July 18, 1908 - McGonigle arrested for stealing a bottle from the bar of the Nevermore Hotel, Midnapore.

Dec. 4, 1909 - McGonigle shakes a rat out of his trousers.

Dec. 4, 1909 - Representative of the Midnapore Gazette calls on Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Dec. 18, 1909 - Midnapore Gazette resents trick played on harmless fire extinguisher salesman.

March 5, 1910 - McGonigle engaged to be married.

Oct. 15, 1910 - Death of Peter J. McGonigle.

Feb. 11, 1911 - McGonigle thought not dead but in a trance.

These are only a few.

---- Ed.

Bob Edwards and I

My friendship with Bob Edwards started in 1904 and continued until his death in 1922. During all that period there were three of us who shared the intimacies of his life. The other two, Jimmy Reilly and W.M. Davidson, Editor of the Calgary Albertan have, like Bob, passed on.

~~How~~ I came to meet ~~him~~ Bob first was a result of ~~to do with~~ one of his periodical outbursts, that not only hampered his work, but greatly shortened his life. ~~Dr. R.G. Brett, later Lieutenant-Governor, told me that he had Bob Edwards staying at the old Banff Saniterium.~~ I had gone to Banff in June 1904 as a Methodist missionary. I was also told by my superiors that one of my duties was to call on all the people who were temporarily resident there. I had seen a few copies of the Eye Opener, which had been published in Calgary for about a year, and so, either through curiosity or missionary zeal, I called on the one and only Bob Edwards. His eyes twinkled when I told him who I was and the position I held. However, I found him interesting and he must have found me not half-bad, for he asked me to call again.

~~Another visit of~~ Bob's ~~was~~ made another visit to Banff in the spring of 1906, ~~and~~ on this occasion he had fled from the wrath of none other than R.B. Bennett, now the noble viscount. R.B. (as he was familiarly called in Calgary,) and Hon. W.H. Cushing were running for the Calgary seat in the legislature of the newly formed Province of Alberta. (Cushing had been Mayor of Calgary and had been appointed Minister of Public Works in the Rutherford Cabinet. Bennett had been member in the North West Territory Legislature.) Bob's Eye Opener had been banned from sale on the C.P.R. trains because of ~~some~~ an attack he made on the officials of the Grand Trunk Pacific, ~~when they~~ It seems

2
the officials were supposed to have mixed pleasure with ~~their~~ the hunt for a terminus that resulted in the choice of Prince Rupert. Bob appealed to R.B., who was C.P.R. solicitor, to get his paper put back on the trains. R.B. apparently, either did not try or could not, with the result that Bob brought out an issue on the morning of the election attacking R.B. and urging the election of Cushing. A tremendously striking cartoon accompanied the article. In the meantime Bob had left for Banff, where he produced the edition of the Eye Opener, and remarked to Dr. Brett and myself," I slaughtered Bennett before I left Calgary, and here is the article that did it." Dr. Brett, who was running in Banff on the same ticket as R.B. said, "You'll get a surprise. Bennett will bob up to-night with a thousand majority." I can still see Bob's face as he exultantly replied, "He can't do it,- I slaughtered him." Sure enough Cushing won by a small majority.

Under the act that granted Alberta autonomy, Edmonton was selected as provisional capital, but the final site was to be settled by a vote of the legislature. The distribution of seats gave Edmonton a tremendous advantage. Dr. R.G. Brett, who had been a member of the Legislature of the North-west Territories, started an agitation to have Banff selected. He had many arguments, among which the one I remember best, was that American capitals were usually in small cities.

When the capital debate was on, Bob Edwards went to Edmonton to hear it. Dr. Brett felt isolated at Banff and went to Calgary. Bob had promised to wire Dr. Brett the results of the vote, the moment it was registered. Impatiently, Dr. Brett waited. Finally a wire was delivered to him from Edmonton, which he read breathlessly. The wire said, "Banff selected capital, vote sixteen to eight." But

Dr. Brett believed it was wise to check the information. As a result of the check he sent a wire to Bob,- "Consult Dr. Braithwaite, will be up on next train."

From Bob, Governor Brett received another wire on the morning of the opening of the Legislature in 1918. W.J. Harmer had been appointed to the Senate and Bob apparently did not approve of the appointment, so he wired to the Governor"Don't forget, in the speech from the throne, to thank Providence for Harmer's appointment to the Senate, and also express thanks that Jimmy Reilly will still be with us."

In the summer of 1907 I was living in Calgary, and the newly organized Canadian Club,with W.L. Walsh,(later Justice and Lieutenant-Governor) as president, decided that on July the first they would present a national flag to the City of Calgary to be hung in Central Park. Bob asked me to come with him to the ceremony as he had two seats at the front ~~of the benches~~ where provision had been made for distinguished people. The seats were arranged so that the people sat with their backs to the hot morning sun, but the speakers, ~~who were~~ R.B. Bennett and Dr. A.O. McRae, looked right into it. I had never heard R.B. speak and was all interest, since I had been told that never since Demosthenes and Cicero had there been anyone who could ~~so~~ amaze the gazing rustics ~~ranged around so~~ like R.B. But no one could speak well against that sun and while the redoubtable Mr. Bennett told his story of the two bands of steel linking together the Provinces and making a united Canada, he did not appear to be at ease. After the crowd dispersed, Bob said to me"Don't judge Mr. Bennett on that effort,"- then he remarked, "R.B. has one great misfortune as a speaker," I waited for him to go on. He said"He has the great misfortune of being eloquent."

The real crisis in Bob's life came in 1908. He was going strong and his paper had a large circulation. Dan McGillicudy, a year or so before, had started a daily paper called the Calgary Daily News. Dan had previously published a paper in a town near my home in Huron County, and was noted for calling a spade a spade, and not an agricultural implement. His son Owen worked with him on the paper and aspired to be a poet. He had been accused in an eastern paper of plagerism, and Bob published the account in the Eye Opener. Dan was waiting for a chance to get even. The opportunity came. The 1908 Dominion elections were on and Clifford Sifton, Later Sir Clifford, formerly Minister of the Interior, was running in Brandon. Bob had for some reason made a habit of attacking Mr. Sifton personally, and Clifford expected that Bob would take the opportunity of the election to continue his attacks, and flood the constituency of Brandon with Eye Openers filled with attacks on the dedoubtable Clifford. So one day the front page of the Calgary Daily News carried the most **vicious** and vituperative article ever written in Canada, or that ever came from the pen of man. It was an attack on Bob, raking him fore and aft, likening him to the most vile characters in history or fiction. What would Bob do about it was the question of the hour. He had often put the harpoon into others, how would he take this attack on himself. We did not have long to wait. Bob swore out a warrant and had McGillicudy arrested for criminal libel. The trial of this action was one of the most interesting ever held in Calgary, and I spent a whole week on a bench at the back of the court room in the old Calgary Court House.

Judge Beck was the presiding Judge, and a six man jury assisted

him in reaching a verdict. Paddy Nolan acted for Bob, while Dan brought E.P. Davies from Vancouver and Clifford Sifton's personal lawyer,-I think his name was Gilmour,- from Brandon to defend him.

Many witnesses, pro and con, were examined. Files of the Eye Opener were presented as exhibits. E.P. Davies, who for personal reasons, had no love for Bob, took occasion to pour his invective upon Bob who was now seeking redress from this scurrilous attack. In his address to the jury, Davies would walk over to the ~~jury~~ box and explain something to them, and in the middle of the explanation he would, as if overcome with emotion at what Bob had written at various times, rush over to where Bob was sitting, ~~and~~ point his finger down at him and shout "This skunk! This scamp ! This scoundrel!! Attacks everybody else and can't take it himself!" You had to hear the dramatic effect ~~of~~ made by Davis as he shouted the three words: "Skunk! Scamp! Scoundrel! " ~~as they echoed back from the old walls~~ to get the full effect of ~~Davies'~~ the two hour attack.

Paddy Nolan, on the other hand was not very impressive. He accused Davies of dragging a red herring across the trail, and based his argument largely on the fact that we had courts, where any of the people Bob had attacked could have come and got redress. He said that McGillicuddy had taken the law into his own hands and must be judged for what he had written, not for what Edwards had done.

The jury brought in a double verdict, finding McGillicuddy guilty, but adding a rider stating that Edwards should also be checked from writing as he did.

Mr. Justice Beck imposed a nominal fine, ~~and~~ approved of the rider and warned Edwards to be more careful what he wrote in the future.

Bob seemed stunned by the whole procedure and from that time judged his friends by those who had stood by him during his trouble. However, the humiliation was too much, and he left Calgary and went to the head of the Lakes, but he did not like it there and came back to Calgary and continued to publish his paper until he died.

Bob told me that he never read the article. He read the first few lines in which Dan dealt with the necessity of skinning a skunk if there was to be any profit. He then seemed to go paralyzed and he sent for Jimmy Reilly and asked him to read it. Jimmy gave him an idea of it, and from there he went to Paddy Nolan and had the warrant prepared. Bob also told me that any further attack by Dan would mean the death of the proprietor of the News. I have never repeated this threat, but from the venom that Bob hurled now and again at Dan in later years I could well believe it was true.

Just before the McGillicudy attack, Bob found out that I was getting married, and he brought me a copy of Burns' Poems, on the front of which he had written, "To Robert Pearson, from R.C. Edwards, on the occasion of his marriage- the former's- Sept. 1908"

In 1909 I left Calgary for Edmonton, and there was a note in the Eye Opener, in which Bob apologized for chronicling church events, but explained why he made this exception and wound up by saying, "Bob, being a total abstainer will find it very lonesome in Edmonton."

During the four years that I was away from Calgary I made many visits to the city and always called on Bob. In 1913, I took over the Secretaryship of the Calgary Y.M.C.A. and so was only a block

from his quarters in the Cameron Block. Bob's lapses seemed to be more frequent, and he came to rely much more on my help. Sometimes he would get Jimmy Reilly and sometimes me. We usually called a friend who had a car and had ~~him~~ Bob put in the hospital, where he could get attention. His sobering-up beverage was always ginger ale, and it had to be a special kind that was made in Ireland. It was carried by the Great West Liquor Store, and I often bought it there for him and took it to the hospital. I used to sneak out of the store with the parcel under my arm and pray that no one would see me.

On one occasion I was taken to the hospital ~~to get attention~~ with ~~for~~ a very severe case of tonsilitis, and was put in the room adjoining Bob's. The doctor who was treating him said, "Do you know who is in the adjoining room?" Bob looked up and the doctor ~~said~~ continued, "Bob Pearson." Bob looked greatly puzzled for a time and then said, "Is he on a bat too?"

Bob and I were opponents in the election for the Provincial Legislature in 1921. Mr. Davidson, editor of the Calgary Albertan, arranged for the four Independents, who were running for election, to put an article on a certain page every day. On this page, at the top, was Bob Edward's picture and what he would do if elected. My picture and article was next and Mr. Adshead and Mrs. Gale below. I do not imagine anyone read beyond Bob's article, but we wrote religiously, nevertheless. R.B. Bennett was a friend of both Bob's and mine at the time, but he had to support the five Conservative candidates. Bob and I had always voted for ~~him~~ R.B., so one night when he was speaking on behalf of the Conservatives, he said, "It may be that you do not want to support the whole five conservative candidates. If you do not want to vote for all five, do not go and vote for the Liberals, vote for Bob Edwards or Bob Pearson." Too many of them must have

heeded R.B.'s advice for the five Conservatives were all defeated while Bob and I were elected.

When it came time for us to go to Edmonton for the session, Bob requested that I get a room in the same hotel, so we got adjoining rooms in the C.J.R. Lodge on 109 Street. Being the only two Independent members we were also seat mates. Bob requested that I assist him in keeping sober. He said, "a lot of people think I can't keep sober and I want to show them I can." He received invitations from several of his old cronies to attend little dinner parties with them. He never refused and said it would be lovely, and then told me I had to get him out of the engagement. He said "tell them anything you like, but if I go they will make me drink." I managed to get him out of his invitations by little social fibs.

He made only one speech in the Legislature and that was to repeal the Prohibition Act that was in force. He gave a very clever address and spoke well, and all the members rushed up at the close of the session to congratulate him. That evening he said to me, " What wouldn't I give just to be able to celebrate the event?" However he did not , and finished the Legislature very good friends with everyone and extremely popular. He was terribly hurt when he read in a prohibition paper a criticism of his address, and several slurs on him, one of which indicated that he spoke as if he had had too much to drink at the time. He had not had any. He seemed sore at me for a time and thought I ought to have been able to prevent such a slander. Shortly after this he fell off the water wagon and went to

the hospital. When he returned he was quite a wreck, but he was able to attend a short summer session, though his heart beat like a trip hammer, and he was under most rigid doctor's orders.

About two weeks before his death I visited him on the verandah of his home, and he started telling me that he was soon going to kick in. I did not think he was in immediate danger and told him so. It was then that he told me if he passed out he wanted me to take charge of everything, and to have no one but myself take any part in his funeral. He said "I can depend on you." This promise caused me considerable embarrasment later because there were two ministers in Calgary who were friendly with him.

At first we were going to have his funeral from the undertaking parlours, but when we heard that Lieutenant-Governor Brett, and Premier Greenfield, besides cabinet ministers, judges, mayors and members of the legislature wanted to be present, Sandy Russell, who was also a friend, and I went into hurried conference. First we thought of Central Church, then we decided that since Bf he did not attend Church we would make other arrangements. He had been elected Honorary President of the War Veterans, and had attended some of their smokers, so we asked for the Memorial Hall. We chose six members of the Legislature as Honorary Pall-bearers and six members of the Mounted Police as active Pallbearers, since he loved the Mounted Police and wrote many interesting articles about them. Even The large hall proved ~~also~~ to be too small and there was an overflow on the street. One of those in the crowd outside was R.B. Bennett.

There is no space to give a digest of what I said at ~~his~~ Bob's funeral, but I spoke for twenty minutes, and every remark I made was a sincere statement.

When everyone else had left his graveside, I found myself standing on the hill beside the McLeod trail with Joe Adair, another Scot, who had come from Edmonton to attend the funeral. Joe reminded me just recently of our conversation at the graveside. He said to me, "Don't you think Bob would be satisfied with the funeral you have given him ?" As I looked to the South and to the North-east, My eyes took in, not only the vista, but Calgary's two breweries, and according to Joe, I remarked, "Bob would have said,'What do you mean, planting me between these two breweries.' " At least if there was a chance to make a humorous remark he would not have passed it up.

After Bob's death, Sandy Russell, who had done journalistic work in Calgary made arrangements with Bob's widow to publish the paper, but he did not continue at it long. He found that Bob and the Eye Opener bore much the same relation as Louis XlV and France (L' état c'est moi). Bob was the Eye Opener.

My closing remarks in the Memorial Hall were "We are burying the most unique character Alberta has ever possessed. People will come and people will go but we will never look upon his like again."

What is Folklore? How old or how oft-repeated does a story have to be before it can be regarded as folklore?

Perhaps this depends partly on the historic background of the country from which it comes.

In most of Alberta, our history goes back little more than one hundred and fifty years, so that some of the stories of the early days of the railroads can almost be regarded as folklore.

The story, for instance, of the lady on the E.D. & B.C. train that, on one celebrated occasion, took two weeks to reach Edmonton. The story has been repeated often enough of her. When she told the conductor that she must get to the city, he told her that she should not have got on the train "in that condition", and her retort that she hadn't!

The early road builders were very ambitious in their choice of names. The first railroad that ran only from Strathcona to Edmonton, over the low-level bridge was called the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific, and, while it is still in operation, it shows little sign of reaching either the Yukon or the Pacific.

The Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway has done better, for, while it completely missed Dunvegan, it is still reaching out for the B.C. boundary, from its terminus at Hines Creek.

The naming of the E.D. & B.C. gave the real-estate operators of that day an opportunity to subdivide and sell in town lots seven quarter-sections of land on the slopes of the Dunvegan Hill.

But long before the railroad builders of the early days were exercising their immagination in naming their roads, the first trails into the north were named and their names spelled Romance.

Will not some old-timer write the story of the Edson Trail before the memory of it is lost, as its three ruts have ~~brand~~disappeared?

Perhaps in some places the wheel-marks of the Red River cart and the centre track of the ox can still be deciphered, showing where the "bull-outfit" travelled on its long trek from Ontario to the Beaver Lodge country.

~~But~~ The oldest and the first trail to be mentioned in the north country is the "Kinistino War Road", which is referred to by David Thompson, the North-West Company's cartographer. This trail was still shown on the town-ship surveys made in the early part of the present century. ~~This trail~~ was used by the Crees of the south when they travelled by the Athabasca and Slave Rivers, across Lesser Slave Lake to a point near Grouard, from whence their war-path ran across country to a crossing of the Smokey, near its junction with the Peace.

This was, apparently, little more than a blazed foot-trail and was never cleared for wheeled traffic, though, for a century or more, it was the only overland route into the Peace River country.

For nearly one hundred years after the first trading companies established their posts on the Peace, all freight was brought into the country by canoe and York boat, by Fond du Lac and Lake Athabasca, but in 1884 the Hudson's Bay Company had a road cut from Grouard to Peace River Crossing.

This was the birth of the historic Grouard Trail, which was travelled by all the pioneers up till thirty years ago, with the exception of those ~~that~~ who found their way into the Grande Prairie country over the Edson Trail.* 1

The old grade of the Grouard Trail, down the Grouard Hill into the valley of the Peace, can still be traced and the experience of driving down that grade in an old Model T. Ford car can never be forgotten. It was in 1913 that the first Model T, owned by the late Mr H.A.George, ~~was~~ made that momentous trip.

After crossing the river at "the Crossing", as Peace River town is still called by the old timers, the trail changed its name. The crossing was first made by swimming the horses or oxen and later by a hand-operated ferry.

Reaching the far bank ~~the~~ it became the Dunvegan Trail and following the river bank up stream for some twelve miles before climbing Brick's Hill to the plateau above.

At the foot of Brick's Hill* 2 there is a creek conveniently situated for the use of the early motorists, who used to stop to fill their radiators and balance an extra pail of water on the running-board to replenish the radiator half way up the hill.

The passengers would run (or walk) behind the car, ready

*1

*2

to provide ~~the~~ extra ~~power~~ power ~~when~~ needed.

Half-way up the hill there was a level spot where the car was parked while drivers and passengers sat around, waiting for the radiator to go off the boil before re-filling it.

Travel on the old trails, whether by ox-cart or Model T, was always an adventure.

With all the recent talk of the Alaska Highway, there has been little said about the Peace River-Yukon Road, a road which, starting from Peace River, ended in the wilderness, after 357 miles of heart-breaking work, ended through lack of ~~Government~~ support, when the B.C. Government failed to cooperate in its completion.

In 1905 a party of 32 Mounted Police arrived at Peace River Landing, with orders to cut a waggon trail through to the Yukon. They ~~were ferried across~~ crossed the river on a primitive ferry, constructed by Mr H.A. George - the first ferry to operate on the Peace. With axes and saws their only equipment, and horses their only power, they bridged torrents and cut trail for three years ~~of~~ ~~xxxx~~ to reach the B.C.-Yukon telegraph line.

Another trail-cutting exploit that deserves a place in Northern history took place in December, 1925, ~~when~~ Louis Bourassa, that celebrated mail-carrier of the North, ~~was caught on the river~~ when a sudden thaw started the ice moving, ~~when he~~ was some 120 miles down stream from Peace River, on his way to Fort Vermilion.

Louis had carried the mail from Peace River to Fort Vermilion for many years, by dog-team, by pack-pony and, later with horses and sleighs.

Before him, his father, John Bourassa, had carried the mail for the Hudson's Bay Company, by dog-team, from Fort Dunvegan to Fort Chipewyan, and Louis was brought up in the tradition that the mail must always go through.

Caught by the moving ice at night, he got his horses and sleighs up the cut-bank, where he was faced with the task of cutting a road for sixty miles through heavy bush to join the Dunvegan Trail.

With two companions he brought the heavily-laden sleighs and the precious mail through to the Fort, seven weeks on the road, but the mail got through.

For this exploit, and for his years of service as mail-carrier, Louis was awarded the medal of the Order of the British Empire at King George the Fifth's Silver Jubilee.

After his death, his son, another John Bourassa, continued to carry the mail to Fort Vermilion until the airplanes took it over and Johnny left to carry destruction over Germany as Pilot of a Lancaster Bomber in the Pathfinder Wing of the R.A.F.

That the King should recognise his exploits by the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross seems only fitting, for the Bourassas have served as Pathfinders in Canada since 1688 when the Francois Bourassa was engaged to trade into "les pays d'en haut" (Illinois) out of Montreal, and René Bourassa was a manager of "la Compagnie de la Baie".

When ~~all~~ the entire continent was ~~resounding with~~ hearing the story of the building of the Alaska Highway, how many people ~~thought~~ heard of those early trail-blazers who, without benefit of bull-dozers or government ~~support~~ backing, carved their way through the wilderness to open up the hidden Empire of the North?

When Bechtel-Price-Callaghan and the K.C.Bridge Company were pouring money out like water, many of the old-timers must have mused over what a much better job Paul Bunyan and Babe, his big blue ox, would have made of it.

~~But~~ the old-timers are dying off and their exploits are in danger of being forgotten, ~~but~~ ~~But there must still be some people in the Beaver Lodge district who could tell the story of the "bull outfit" and their trek over the Edson Trail.~~ even

While the airplane and the bull-dozer are ~~still carrying Romance into the~~ creating a new folklore of the northland, the tales of its heroic past should not be lost to posterity.

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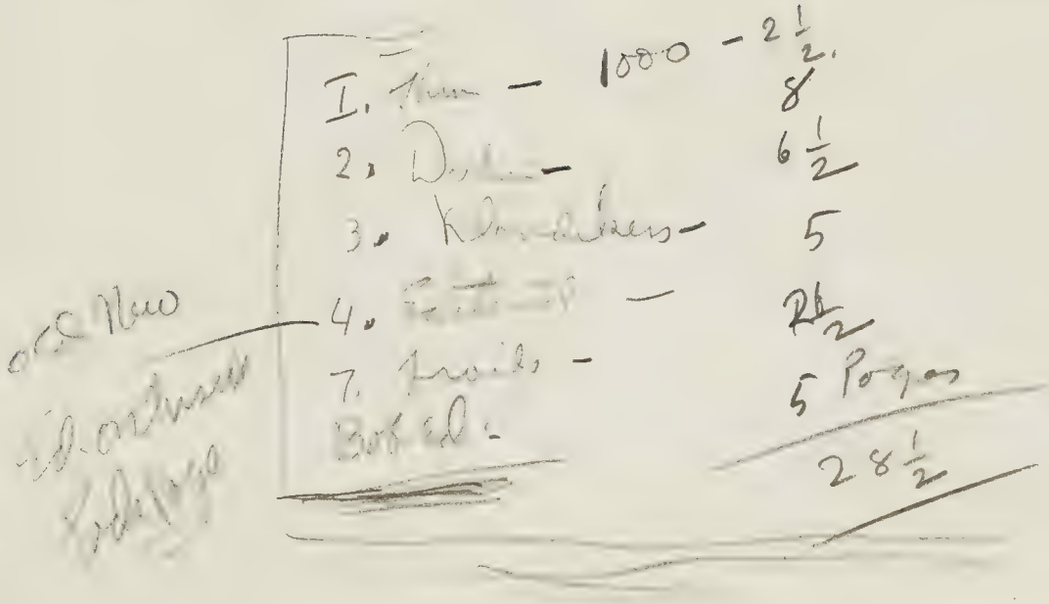
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One night, Gus, while looking over his trap line, was caught out in a storm. Fortunately he found an abandoned log cabin and was glad to take shelter in it where he made his bed upon the floor. About midnight he was awakened by somebody passing a hand over his face. He sat up and lit a match. Nobody was in the room. He lay back and went to sleep. Soon he was awakened by the hand again. Again he lit a match and found nothing. This time when he lay down he did not go to sleep. He was convinced that something or somebody was playing tricks on him and was determined to catch the phony spook. As soon as he had quieted down, the hand passed over his face once more. Instantly his own hand flashed out -- and he encountered nothing at all.

Later he investigated the history of that old shack and found that it had once been the home of an old woman who had lived alone. She had long since moved away, but shortly before Gus had spent the night in her house, she had died. Gus says he wouldn't have felt so comfortable if he had suspected that the woman was his visitor that night.

One winter night as Gus was walking home he heard the jingling of sleigh bells and turned to discover a black team drawing a cutter trotting down the road behind him. Thinking to catch a ride home, he stopped in the middle of the road and waited. But the team went as far as a neighbor's corner and turned into the yard. It went past the house, past the barn, and then went jingling off through the woods.

"That's queer," thought Gus, "there's no road out that way." So he went back to the corner to investigate. He found no tracks but his own!

The original name of Medicine Hat, as translated from the Indian lingo, was Medicine Man's Hat. An Indian camping alone by the Saskatchewan one night was looking across the river and observed that the shadow cast on the ground by the moon bore a resemblance to the curiously shaped hat worn by the medicine men of his tribe. He spoke about it to his fellow-Indians, and they, being easily tickled by odd fancies, dubbed the spot Medicine Man's Hat. This has since become Medicine Hat, or, as some Gallic historiographers have it, Calomel Chapeau.

FROM THE CROW'S NEST TO DATE

I

The Crow's Nest Pass, according to legend, received its name as a result of a great battle between the Indians of the Blackfoot Nation, and the Crows.

The Blackfeet, which included the Bloods and the Peigans, were camped at the time near where the city of Lethbridge now stands. The Crows had crossed from Montana and raided the Blackfoot horse herds. Their depredations were discovered, the Crows were persued, and a final battle fought under the shadow of Turtle Mountain. The Crows were all killed, and their hiding place was called thereafter 'Crow's Nest' by the Indians.

The scene of this battle was completely obliterated by the greatest land slide ever known in the Rocky Mountains.

On the morning of April 29, 1903, a C.P.R. westbound freight train crawled slowly through the Crow's Nest Pass; through the little mining town of Frank, and past the Mile, massive slope of Turtle Mountain. The time was just after four o'clock.

To the boys on the train the trip was routine. The sounds were just the same; the dim, cold light was normal for the time of year. In the caboose, Sid Choquette, the brakeman, was thinking that he'd be glad when the sun came up for the air was cold and damp. . . .

In Frank, the barkeeper at the hotel had just finished cleaning up. He'd had a hard night. He was going home to bed . . . . just as soon as he got rid of a lone drunk who was hanging around. The barkeeper sighed, put on his hat, and reached out his hand for the drunk's collar. . . .

Down the street Sam Hanes stirred in his bed. For some reason he was uneasy . . . couldn't sleep. He struck a match and looked at his watch. The time was seven minutes past four. He lay down again, pulled the bedclothes over his shoulders. He shut his eyes, but in a minute he flicked them open and lay in darkness. He strained his ears to hear the breathing of his wife. From another room one of his daughters coughed . . . .

In the Frank coal mine, the night shift was getting ready to lay off. The nineteen men were tired, dirty . . . ready to quit. They plodded toward the mine entrance. One of the men noticed that the mine horses were acting very nervous. He was too tired to care. . . .

In the Leitch household the baby was crying. . . .

At ten minutes past four, ~~hell~~ Seldom broke loose in Frank. The whole top and north side of Turtle Mountain slid with a terrifying roar directly down into the Crow's Nest.

The freight train had just passed the Mountain when the avalanche struck. The startled crew, looking back as the train bumped to a halt, heard a sound louder than the loudest thunder, and saw what they thought was a heavy gas, or fog rising from mountain and town. To their surprised eyes the town of Frank seemed to have completely disappeared. The crew gathered at the rear of the train, huddled together silent, awed by the sudden tragedy.

It was Sid Choquette, the brakeman, who first remembered the "Spokane Flyer". The express was shortly due to speed through the pass on its way to the coast. The men could guess as they looked back, that the C.P.R. tracks lay covered by stone many feet deep.

There was only one thing to do and Sid did that thing. He started back toward Frank, over the slide with pieces of rock still hurtling down the Mountain. The dust was so thick he couldn't see what lay ahead. Some of the stones were as large as boxcars; but Sid went right ahead. He arrived in time to flag the "Flyer".

Sam Ennes, who couldn't sleep, suddenly found himself pinned under the jagged timbers of his home. Desperately Sam pushed at the weight that held him down. After a terrible struggle, he got himself free. His legs were torn by the nails in the boards. His face was bleeding from many cuts.

Some here he could hear his children crying. He began to frantically search in the ruins. He found the three girls first, then his wife. They had miraculously escaped serious injury.

Suddenly Mrs. Ennes began to shriek that the baby, Gladys, was missing. They scrambled in the dust-filled darkness and then Mrs. Ennes found the baby buried in slime and mud. Believing that the child was dead, Mrs. Ennes stumbled toward the faint light in the MacLean house, beyond the stricken area. When she arrived she discovered that the baby was alive and not even scratched. Mrs. Ennes herself had a broken collar bone.

In the mine the workmen reached the entrance. They found it blocked up tight. Believing that it was just a small cave-in, the men turned and went west to another smaller exit. The horses remained in the mine.

When the miners finally got outside, many of them knew they would never see their homes and families again. A number of

the houses were buried over one hundred feet deep.

In the Leitch house, three children escaped while three others and the parents were killed. One of the children, a baby, was entirely uninjured. It was found on a huge rock that had been pushed quite a distance along by the slide.

The unharmed people of Frank wondered what had brought the catastrophe upon them. Some said it was a volcano; others, that it was an earthquake. Many thought it was a mine explosion, or a great quantity of gas suddenly released.

That the side of Turtle Mountain, which seemed so friendly and protective, had simply slid down on the little town crouching under its shoulder, did not occur to many those first few hours. Tales of a visitation for sin were heard, and to the drunk leaving the barroom, this seemed likely. He started to run -- no one knew where.

Help was rushed to Frank -- not that there was much anybody could do. The dead were already buried. The living were in mortal terror that the rest of the mountain would come crashing down.

Many of the passengers on the westbound train held up by the slide, tried to walk across to the trains waiting on the other side. They found their shoes cut to pieces, their clothing ruined by the lime stone dust. -- Calgary

South of the now prosperous city of Drumheller, flows the lovely and rather peaceful Red Deer River.....from whence comes this story..... and what a story....

It concerns a typical cow-puncher in the olden days, who would take any gamble and had the reputation of taking any dare.....It appears that our cowfriend bragged that he could jump further than anyone else in the district.....Althouth he had no taker.....he decided to prove his statement.....

Everyone for miles around congregated at the spot, on the appointed day.....The cow-poke jumped.....Incidentally there wasn't anything unusual about his dress, other than he wore rubber heels on this riding shoes.....Well sir, he jumped so hard.....that he kept on bouncing for 3 solid days.....and at last the sherriff in the locality was finally persuaded to shoot him.....in order to save the cpw-puncher from starving to death.

.....

3219- 3rd. Street. West.

Calgary, Alta.

December 2nd 1 9 4 3.

Prof. Robert E. Gard,

Extension Department,

University of Alberta,

Edmonton, Alberta.

Sir:

Thank you very much for your prompt reply to my letter. I would indeed be very grateful to receive any or all copies of your radio scripts. I feel that many humerous and interesting yarns could be culled from them.

So sorry that my remarks require further amplification. My radio program is entirely different from your feature over C.K. U. A. Mine is a 45 minute period of old time dance music, in which I am endeavouring to create a typical old time barn dance atmosphere.

The idea of relating possibly one or two yarns on each program, (Saturday evenings 8.40-9.25 C.F.A.C.)would, I believe, be a welcome change.

The station offers a small cash prize each week for the best story submitted. If agreeable with you I'd like to give you a credit line on all folklore or yarns which you might send.

You possibly, at some future date will publish these same tales in the form of a book. When this time arrives, the writer would like to be informed so that I may purchase an edition.

Enclosed herewith please find copy of a story submitted by a listener, which although not suitable for radio, can possibly be of some use to you.

Hoping to hear from you in the near future and extending to you and yours a sincere wish for a merry christmas,

I Remain,

Yours truly,

C.W. KEHOE.

P.S. Found 2 more stories you might like to have.

CWK

John D. Higinbotham
95 Delhi Street
Guelph, Ontario

April 26,1945.

Dear Professor Gard:

Pardon this brief note,but since I received your letter I have been invited to address a women's club at Grimsby,in the Niagara district,on May 7,next,giving little time for preparation.

Enclosed,find two items which I came upon yesterday when going through some of my papers.Hope that they may reach you in time.

Yours sincerely,

John D. Higinbotham.

Once upon a time a woman in Medicine Hat was committed for trial charged with selling lottery tickets. She was raffling a piano and sold tickets at one dollar each. Known throughout the West as a valiant defender, she went to Calgary to secure Paddy Nolan's legal services. Paddy asked her if she had any of the "pasteboards" left, to which she replied, "Yes". He then described to her the situation of a large stone building on 7th Aveune, West (The Court House) and said, "You go in and take the second door to the left and you will find a kindly old gentleman there who will buy a ticket." She went as directed, found the "kindly old gentleman"--none other than Mr. Justice Scott, and, being a personable and comely woman, made a sale. On the eve of the trial, Paddy and Judge Scott were on the same train enroute to Medicine Hat. Paddy twitted the judge about taking part in illegal raffles. When the case was called Paddy pleaded guilty for his client, then addressed the Court on her behalf: "It is a well known principle of law that an accomplice is guilty the same as the principal. The person who buys a raffle ticket is equally culpable with the person who sells. Is there any reason why one should be punished, and the other allowed to go 'Scott' free?" The Judge's upper lip was twitching during t e eloquent and impassioned speech. He gave a hasty "sentence suspended" and, evidently, gave deep thought to what he would say to Paddy after wards.

Man's Inhumanity

Tourist (addressing a Negro whom he had just overtakenon the trail, and pointing to some distant objects on the prairie) "Are those human beings over there?"

Negro (who had evidently been inhumanly treated by the distant objects), "Yes, dems cowpunchas - partly human, dat is, dey doant eat grass."

Heard in [illegible]

P43

Unity I

There is a stirring music in Alberta. I have heard it time and again as I've been traveling...a soft, lonely melody on the prairies, a great organ thundering in the Mountains.... a wild haunting music in the north country.

Sometimes I have heard a haunting wail, like the ~~wailing~~ sound the old red river carts used to make. ...or I have heard a dim thunder like the sound the hooves of ~~the~~ millions of buffalo used to make....

Ghost music, good music, music tainted with longing, with homesickness, with faith, hope and quietness....A mysterious western melody.

Lured to the west by ~~the mystery~~ ~~are~~ the Alberta ~~xxxxx~~ folk. From England, Ireland, Scotland,....From Denmark, Norway, Sweededm — From Holland, Belgium, France and Italy....From the Ukraine, from the East, North South and West,,,,the people.....~~sometimes~~ racially different, temperamentally different, but people of courage... men and women with a new faith in a new country.

They brought with them their customs, their traditions...they ~~xwithxthem~~ a new meaning and color to the West. For instance, the Ukrainians....

Anyone knowing the old Ukrainian country, and the details of its life, must, ~~of course~~, know about a beautiful custom unknown in any other country or nation in Europe. When evening, fell, and their work was over the youth of the villages met together to sing. This singing lasted long into the night. It was singing from the heart; not from the printed score, and without a conductor...but it came from a deep desire to sing, and from a love of the native music. The harmonization was original....the inborn intuitionof generations, inherited for hundreds and hundreds of years, created the rules of this harmony. The songs were sung in three parts, in such a characteristic way that every song executed by the the youth of the Unkrainian villages was highly artistic and of outstanding musical quality.

The Unkrainian folk have sung their songs from unknown times. It is not strange that these songs became an inseperable part of the life and customs of the Ukrainian village andk the people. Many of these songs were brought to Canada, and many of the Unkrainian folk still sing them. Singing has always been important in the lives of an agricultural people...the Unkrainian songs enrich the Alberta countryside.

The dances, too, image the reaction of the soil-tiller to the manifestations of nature...~~some of the~~ Ukrainian dances are graceful and weaving, almost as though they would stir the sun to a greater activity. The battle dance is stirring and clashing, with a squatting step....the life on the Steepe, is whip-cracking, quick...the Chumak. Love, courtship, marriage, and in fact, most of the emotional experiences of h the people find expression in what critics call the most

agile, the most finished, and most spirited of folk dancing.

Some of you may be familiar with the traditional Ukrainian costumes. And the Ukrainian Costumes — They are greatly varied, but all of them are stamped with basic qualities which differentiate them from the costumes of other countries. They are decorative, but are always practical, and consistent with the human figure... neither following the lines of the human frame so closely as to obstruct movement, nor contradicting the lines for the sake of fashion. They emphasize modesty, and strive after economy, yet strive also to attain esthetic quality. The Ukrainian girl places a garland of flowers in her hair, so as to lay emphasis on her face...a secondary emphasis is laid on neck shoulders and busom by embroideries an this is balanced by the embroidered jacket and apron.

The Ukrainian peoples in Alberta have brought with them their proverbs, their superstitions. In their own way they contribute to the color, to the heritage of the Province countryside. Like all the people who remove from their traditional surroundings, much of their lore is slipping away. It should be collected and kept, as part of the pattern of the countryside...as part of the picture of Albert

Any national people is apt to be intensely proud of its heritage. Persecution, intolerance, greed, has driven many a people in search of new land....a new home...a new freedom. But they do not come to the new land empty-handed. They bring with them often, things of rare beauty that are too often neglected, forgotten or ignored. It seems to me, that a better knowledge of the traditions customs of

all the varying peoples would do something to encourage tolerence, understanding.

For the peoples of Alberta, ~~especially~~, furnish a wonderful mosiac.....From the legends of the Indians... the Crees, the Beavers, the Sarcee; the Stonies, the Blackfoot, The heritage of ~~the English-speaking folk~~ old England, Scotland, Ireland.....The folklore of all the people.... and the folklore of the people is the heart of the people... Strange, that this heart is nearly the first thing to decay, in the transposition of a people to a new land.....

Traditional customs are not easy to maintain.... circumstances alter....things must change to fit a new condition, but racial differences are not easy to eradicate. How much better a thing, then, if racial understanding might come from a true human appreciation of the best things in a people's life, rather than the worst. How much better to appreciate the wonderful imagery of the Indian legends as a measure of value, than to view the Indian purely from the standpoint of ~~a social worker...that the Indian is only a problem case...to be dealt with coldly: without appreciation.~~ his economic status.

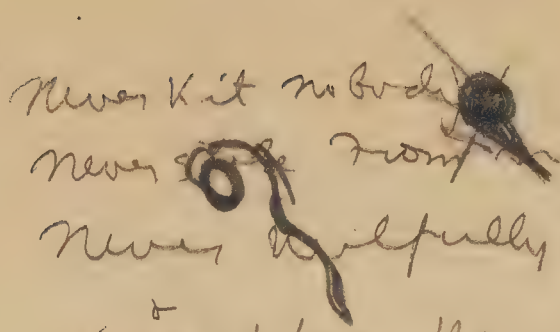
LEGEND OF LAKE LOUISE

How good a thing it might be to know the background of the peoples of the entire region.....the conditions in the length and bredth of Alberta that produced the tales and the figures that are becoming legend.....

THE SOUTH

Jim Conrad

"He was every man's friend & never locked his cabin door."



Never hit no body
Never [illegible] from nobody
Never [illegible] turned nobody
Kept open house for travelers
[illegible]

No, Mom, I am [illegible]
Eddie

mopping his brow. Despite his bulk, however, he was very active, and bounced about like a rubber ball. His extraordinary wit was one of his greatest characteristics, and gave him a remarkable standing in the West.

Paddy was a great friend of Bob Edwards, editor of the famous Calgary Eye Opener, and it was Paddy's steady advice which probably helps explain why Bog was so seldom bothered by libel suits. Bob, of course, poked fun at Paddy in the Eye Opener, just as he did at all his friends. In a letter published in the Eye Opener, reputedly written by Bob's fictitious and always down and out remittance man, Albert Buzzard-Cholomondeley, Albert states to his father in England:

I must havea few hundred pounds immediately to secure the services of a lawyer from Calgary. There is a famous lawyer there by the name of P. Nolan. All the best murderers go to him. On one occasion my friend the bartender told me that Mr. Nolan once defended a man who had killed another by filling him full of buckshot. His line of defense was that the deceased had come to his death through natural causes, because how could a man be expected to live with a pound of lead in his vitals? The jury took the same view, and the murderer is now living a virtuous life as a traveling man.

HIGH WINDS

A tourist alighted from the train at Lethbridge and after having considerable difficulty in buttoning his overcoat with one hand while holding his hat on with the other he walked over to the shelter of the depot where he asked a farmer standing there: "I say, my good man, does it always blow like this here?"

"Well, no," he drawled, "it just blows like this for about a week and then it blows like hell!"

AN ALBERTA CORN-SHELLER

In Macleod they were preparing for an exhibition of field corn grown in Southern Alberta. Several hundred samples were all arranged on tables in a barn when one of the dust storms came up and everyone ran for shelter forgetting to shut the doors. When the storm was all over they found that the samples had been blown through a knothole in the back of the barn and shelled as they went through.

Then there was the calf which was held up against the barn by the wind until it starved to death.

ALBERTA'S MAIN INDUSTRY

The old lady in the East had just finished reading that it was so cold in Alberta that when the cattle laid down their tails froze to the ground and broke off when they got up.

"Well," she exclaimed, "this is the first time I have really understood why this extensive business of retailing cattle!"

OUR MOUNTAIN MENACE

There was that dreadful animal in the mountains known as the "Rack-a-Lou" with two legs on one side shorter than the two on the other side, so he could sun on the side hills. The way of escape when pursued by it was to run in the opposite direction; They couldn't turn around.

m On the morning of April 29, 1903, the people living in a thirty or forty mile radius from the little mining town of Frank, in the Crow's Nest Pass, heard a terrific rumbling noise that trembled the whole earth. Some said it was a volcano.....others that it was an earth quake.....some terrified and slightly mystical people whispered that it was the end of the world.

Few suspected that the rumbling noise they heard was the sound of the greatest avalanche ever known in the Rocky Mountains.....that under the thundering mass of rock some eighty persons were buried.... that a great portion of the town of Frank, Alberta had been wiped off the map.

Naturally, the surviving people in Frank were most terrified and puzzled of all..... That the side of Turtle Mountain, which had seemed so friendly and protective, had simply slid down on the little town crouching under its shoulder did not occur to many those first hours .

The word spread.....help was rushed to Frank....not that there was much anybody could do. The dead were already buried. The living were in mortal terror that the rest of the mountain would come crashing down.

In the hours following the slide,
Passengers on a westbound C.P.R. train held up by the slide, tried to walk across to the other side where another train was waiting. They found their shoes cut to pieces, their clothing ruined by the limestone dust. A Calgary

Herald reporter on the scene, wired his paper: "To traverse two miles of boulders, some bigger than a railway coach, tossed into piles and ravines, is a task that tries a strong man, well shod. For people with thin shoes, and unaccustomed to mountains, the trip is almost suicide. I had a suit of clothes ruined by the white lime, my boots were cut to pieces, and my physical system is a wreck that calls for at least a week's recuperation." Editor pleased!

The slide had occurred on Wednesday morning. On Saturday, Frank was a deserted village. A committee, including the mine inspector, crawled up the side of Turtle and reported that they had seen large cracks, newly formed, which led them to believe that the slide would reoccur. This report, backed up by the statements of Engineer Mahony of the C.P.R. that he had kept a careful watch on Turtle Mountain for most of a day, and had seen the mountain creeping, convinced the remaining citizens of Frank that they should vacate. Most of them went to Blairmore.

For nine days a careful watch was kept. At the end of nine days, when no further general slide had occurred, Premier Haltain decided that the citizens of Frank could return if they wished. Many did return, to live most of the summer in terror. Finally there was a smaller slide in September. The slide, according to the Calgary Herald, was never really reported. The Frank citizens feared the report would "Damage the town commerically".

One of the touching incidents connected with the story concerns the horses imprisoned in the mine. All but two of the men escaped fairly easily, but all the horses stayed in the mine.

When the rescue party managed to clear the main slope, some 29 days later, they encountered a depressing sight. All but one of the horses had died of starvation and thirst. The animals had gnawed the mine props and the wood on the cars in search of food.

The remaining horse was fastened between a car and the side of the entrance. He was very weak -- almost gone. The horse was given a few drops of water and brandy. He lifted his head. The party left in search of blankets to keep the horse warm since they could not move him. As they went they heard the horse neigh faintly several times. When they returned ten minutes later, the horse was dead.

Old timers say the horse died of a broken heart. He thought he was being left alone in the mine.

The greatest slide in the Rocky Mountains was the result of probably not a single cause, but a combination of causes. There was a mild earthquake in the region in 1903 which may have been a factor. The fact that large chambers had been opened up in the mine, was thought by some to have caused the disaster.

Turtle Mountain, however, is peculiar. It is a great block of limestone, overthrust upon shale, sandstone and coal beds. The whole thing is an unusually weak mass of rock. There is some reason for believing that the "slide" can happen again, but ~~Frank~~ Crowsnest folk, apparently, are not worrying.

Passengers on the C.P.R. through the pass are amazed at the desolation still to be seen. The railroad now runs right on top of the slide. It took 4,000 days a month, working twenty-four hours a day, to rebuild the railroad.

When they were clearing away the debris for the railroad, it was necessary to use quantities of dynamite. The blasting caused snow to fall in the middle of May! Newly born calves on ranches in the Frank area smothered and died as a result of the snow.

For weeks the Frank school was used as a morgue. Parts of a human body would be found, and a jury empanelled to try to make identification. This was not often possible.

Most of the eighty persons killed that terrible morning were buried at the scene of death. Some were not, and they lie in a grave near Frank, with the inscription:

Here lie the Remains of Some of
the Victims of the Frank Slide.
April 29, 1903

The Frank Slide has become a tragic legend of the Canadian Rockies.

together and they came to a little stream. The native Calgarian was going to step over it, but the visiting cousin took a look at it an' started to take off his clothes. On being asked what he doing, he said, "I'm not going to take a chance on stepping over. It may be a lot wider than it looks due to the rarified air."

And certainly no less interesting than the deceptive distance of the West is this tale explaining how certain western creatures learned to hop. This one was told to Lt. Halpert by Alex R. McTavish.

There's a real lead in stories about the dry years in this country -- in the early '80's. There's been many stories told about them. It didn't rain for so long that the ground began to crack. And these were not ordinary cracks, but they kept getting wider until the whole country was just a network of cracks leaving little islands with large crevices between. It's said that the rabbits used to walk like ordinary animals, but in order to get from one island to another they had to hop and therefore acquired the habit of hopping. Some people say that's where the grasshopper learned to hop -- from jumping from one island to another. Prairie animals such as the antelope became very expert at it. In fact everything that traveled had to hop. Even the old-timers, who were very few in those days, did their share of hoping. Naturally they

acquired a hopping gait too, but this gait did not stay with them after normal weather conditions sealed up the cracks. But there are some of the real old-timers from the prairie region that still have a suspicious loping gait.

. . . . . .

Accounts by early travelers in the West often furnish some of the best yarns. Colonel P. A. Moore, of Banff, reminds us that this is true.

"The following account," he writes, "is taken from The North-West Passage by Land, by Viscount Milton and W. B. Cheadle, M.D. The Narrator is Chief Trader Hardisty who related this yarn to Milton and Cheadle some time in May, 1863. This story appealed to me, especially as it is, as far as I know, the first recorded instance of athletic training in the Great North West."

and the locale

The locale of this yarn was old Fort Benton, Montana, the famous trading post on the Missouri. This should make the story especially interesting to Albertans, since Fort Benton was headquarters for most of the trading into Southern Alberta before the arrival of the railroad. The Fort Benton trail is one of the great historic roads of the province.

We'll Hardisty told it to Milton & Cheadle:

Here's the story: "One day a solitary and adventurous Cree made his appearance at the Fort on foot. Shortly after his arrival, a body of mounted Blackfeet arrived, and discovering the presence of one of the hostile tribe, clamorously demanded that

he should be given up to them to be tortured and scalped. The trader in command of the fort was anxious to save the life of the Cree, yet afraid to refuse to surrender him, for the Blackfeet were numerous and well armed, and had been admitted within the stockade. After much discussion, a compromise was agreed to, the white man engaging to keep the Cree in safe custody for a month, at the end of which time the Blackfeet were to return to the Fort, and the prisoner was to be turned loose, with a hundred yards start of his pursuers, who were bound to chase him only on foot, and with no other arms but their knifes.

"The Blackfeet took their departure, and the Cree was immediately put into hard training. He was fed on fresh buffalo meat, as much as he could eat, and made to run around the Fort enclosure, at full speed, for an hour twice every day.

"At the expiration of the stipulated month, the Blackfeet came to the Fort, according to their agreement. Their horses were secured within the walls, all their arms taken from them except their knives, and then the expected victim was escorted to the starting place by the whole staff of the establishment, who turned out on horseback to see fair play.

"The Cree was placed at his post, 100 yards ahead of his blood-thirsty enemies, who were eager as wolves for their prey. The word was given, and away darted the hunted Indian, the pursuers following with frantic yells. At first the pack of Blackfeet gained rapidly, for terror seemed to paralyse the limbs of the unfortunate Cree, and his escape seemed hopeless. But as his enemies came within a few yards of him, he recovered his presence

of mind, shook himself together, his training and fine condition began to tell, and, to their astonishment and chagrin, he left them with ease at every stride. In another mile he was far in advance, and pulling up for an instant, shook his fist triumphantly at his baffled pursuers, and then quickly ran out of sight!"

As far as ~~Hardisty~~ we know he is still going!

. . . . . .

A slightly different type of race that occurred at Medicine Hat and involved a famous western strong man is recounted by George Shepherd, of West Plains, Saskatchewan. The story is about Fightin' Joe Wylie and was told to Mr. Shepherd by Gabriel Lavallie, aged Metis of the Cypress Hills. This is the yarn just as Mr. Shepherd worte it down:

"It was somewhere about 1884 that I was in Medicine Hat and first met Joe Wylie. It was on a Sunday afternoon and about the only thing to do in those days on Sunday was to get drunk, fight, or go horse racing. This Sunday there was a big crowd out on the race track, which was a flat place up on the river bank south of town. There was a big fellow up there named Ed Rowe selling whisky at 50 cents a cup.

"There was also a big guy up there named Jack Boudoin riding a big heavy horse with a large Mexican saddle and taperderas. And there was this big Englishman, Fightin' Joe Wylie, who must have been about six feet four inches in height, riding a large black horse that he called Nigger.

Accounts by early travellers in the west sometimes furnish some of the best yarns. Take, for instance, the book called " The North West Passage by Land" by ~~Viscount~~ Vi-Kount Milton and W. B. Cheadle, M. D.

These two men were the first real trans-canadian tourists...that is, they were not the first to make the long trans-canadian journey from coast to coast, but they were the first to make the journey for pure pleasure..... for the sheer enjoyment of seeing new lands, hunting buffalo and visiting the gold regions of the Cariboo. Dr. Cheadle, to whom we are indebted for the actual writing of the book, was just 27 years old when the trip was made in 1862..... and then, of course, the Prairie provinces were really a wild west, without roads or settlements.....deserted, with the exception of a few fur trading posts and roaming bands of Indians.

Dr. Cheadle ~~had been~~ was a very sturdy English son, a champion oarsman at Cambridge, and was well endowed with an adventurous nature. His accounts are faithful in ~~every~~ detail, and none of the color is skipped.

One of the most interesting yarns in "The North West Passage by Land" was recalled to my attention by Col. Phil Moore, of Banff, who wrote me that," the following story is interesting because it is, I believem the first example of athletic training in the West."

Now Coming from Col. Moore, himself a student of the history of athletics, I, again re-read the yarn ~~with extra~~. ~~I think it will interest you. Here it is.~~ The tale was narrated, originally, to Milton and Cheadle by Chief Factor Hourie

THE LAST BATTLE

The following article appeared in the Lethbridge News dated April 30th, 1890. Dr. Kennedy, writer of the article 55 years ago, was North West Mounted Police physician at Fort Macleod.

It is to be noted that the nomenclature of the rivers at Lethbridge has been changed since the article was written in 1890. The river at Lethbridge now known as the Oldman River, was at that time called the Belly River.

The accompanying picture painted on buffalo hide tells the complete story of the battle.

1957

~~THE BATTLE~~

It is within the knowledge of most of the residents of the Northwest, that the Indian population of the Territories is composed mainly of two great divisions -- the Crees and Assiniboines forming one, and the Blackfoot Confederacy or the Blackfeet, Bloods, and Piegans the other. Speaking different languages, inhabiting different though adjoining parts of the Territories, and with different manners and customs, they have been enemies from time immemorial, and it is unquestionably due to this fact that the rebellion of 1885 was so quickly and easily put down. Had the Blackfeet forgotten their old enmity and joined hands with the Crees, it is hardly possible to calculate the enormous additional loss of life and property that whuld have followed, and we cannot therefore be too devoutly thankful that out of evil there came good -- that an hereditary feud between the two great camps was the means of ensuring peace and safety to a large and populous part of the Northwest.

I have said that most nor'westers are aware of the two great divisions, and ossibly of the fact that they are mutually antagonistic; but I venture to say that few of them know that, at the present site of the Galt coal mine, these two races came together in mortal combat, and fought out one of the greatest Indian battles of the past fifty years. I propose telling the story as briefly as possible because I believe the event to be

worthy of record, and also of interest to the people of Canada. Additional incentives are found in the fact that I know the ground well and have the details of the battle from an eye witness who was also a participant.

It was late in the fall of 1870. The preceding year, smallpox had swept through the tribes, and left in its wake whole camps of "dead lodges". (A "dead lodge" is, or was one of the burial customs of these Indians. When a brave died he was rolled in robes, his arms and trappings were laid beside him, along with enough food and water to last him on his journey to the Happy Hunting Grounds, and the lodge was left standing over him. These lodges were never disturbed.) The mortality was estimated by competent authorities at forty or fifty percent. The Crees and Assiniboines thought this a favorable opportunity to strike a decisive blow at their powerful enemy, and accordingly organized and despatched a war party, numbering in the neighborhood of six or eight hundred braves. Big Bear, Piapot, Little Mountain, and Little Pine -- names which became rather well known in '85 -- were among the Crees and Assiniboine Chiefs, either present themselves or represented by their bands, and they were largely reinforced by the South Assiniboines.

The Blackfeet and Bloods were then camped mainly on Belly River between Kipp and Whoop-Up, two whisky trading posts about twenty miles apart, but the Blackfeet themselves were not numerically strong. The South Peigans were camped on the St. Mary, above Whoop-Up, which is at the junction of the Belly and St. Mary, having been driven to this side of the line by the American

Expedition against them under Col. Baker. Big Leg, Black Eagle, and Heavy Shield were their chiefs. Crow Eagle led the North Peigans, and Bull Back Fat and Button Chief the Bloods. The South Peigans were well armed with repeating rifles, needle guns, and revolvers, the Bloods were not so well equipped, while the Crees and Assiniboines had only old muskets, Hudson Bay fukes,and bows and arrows to depend on.

The Crees reached Little Bow, about twenty-five miles away, and small parties from the main band, sent out to reconnoitre, succeeded in stealing several horses from small camps about Whoop-Up. One night, however, about the 25th of October, the whole band set out and descended on a few lodges about three miles above Whoop-Up, on Belly River, killing a brother of Red Crow, Chief of the Bloods and two or three squaws. The noise aroused the whole Blood camp, which was in the immediate vicinity, and in a few minutes their braves were engaging the enemy, while messengers were riding in hot haste to alarm the South Peigans.

Such was the commencement of probably the only purely Indian pitched battle in the Canadian Northwest,of which we have any authentic record.

The first faint streaks of dawn had hardly begun to show in the east when the Peigans came up and the fight became general; the Crees slowly retreating across the prairie toward the present site of Lethbridge (the distance between the rivers here is four or five miles) and the Blackfeet following. The river banks reached, the Crees took up their position in a large coulee

running up from the river and out on the prairie, while the Peigans, after much difficulty, succeeded in establishing themselves in a shorter coulee to the south. A large number of Bloods and Blackfeet were in a small coulee to the north, and on the prairie to the north and west, but they found themselves too much exposed, and during the progress of the fight, gradually worked around to the south. The Crees on the whole had much the best position. The horses of course were stationed in the bottom out of range.

The main fighting seemed to have been between the two coulees first described. They are parallel, from three to four hundred feet wide, and separated by a ridge varying in width from thirty to two hundred feet. Here for over four hours the battle raged, the braves crawling to the edige of the coulee and exchanging shots with the more adventurous of the enemy. A head, a hand, a piece of blanket or robe -- anything was enough to shoot at. It was a contest in which skill and cunning in taking advantage of the inequalities of the ground came largely into play. It is stated that several were badly injured by heavy stones thrown across the narrowest part of the ridge from one coulee into the other. Two Peigans attempted to gallop down the ridge for purpose of ascertaining the strength and position of the enemy, one was killed outright, and the other badly wounded and his horse killed under him. In all during this time about a dozen Blackfeet were killed, and a large number wounded. It is impossible to say how many Creed were killed.

The Peigans finally got a strong froce of braves behind a

butte, which in a measure commanded the Cree coulee, and the fire from them and from their friends in the coulee, became hotter and hotter, until the Crees, becoming alarmed, began to effect a strategic movement to the rear by slipping out of the coulee and making for the river. At this instant, Jerry Potts, a half-breed Peigan (he afterwards became famous as a police guide), who was reconnoitering around the bank of the ridge facing the river, perceived this movement, and made a sign to his companions in the coulee to charge, and charge they did. Some on horseback, some on foot, they poured over the ridge and down the coulee, driving the now panic stricken Crees before them, and killing without quarter. A large number of the latter were forced out of the ravine over the point of a hill to the north. The descent here is some twenty or thirty feet, and almost perpendicular, and over this pursuers and pursued both rushed headlong, horses and men tumbling over each other, the men fighting and struggling for dear life, until the bank was reached and the fight became a butchery. The Crees plunged into the current, and moved across almost in a solid mass, while the Blackfeet halted on the brink and shot them down like sheep. To use Jerry Potts' expression: "you could fire with your eyes shut and be sure to kill a Cree". The scene now, and during the charge, must have been one not easily forgotten. The river valley was filled with dust and smoke, the air resounded with the report of rifles and the deafening war cries of the Blackfeet, while thick and fast came the death yells of the Crees.

The slaughter did not end at the river. The Blackfeet followed the Crees across, and being joined by a large contingent of their

brethren, who had crossed higher up, the butchery went on, and on one spot where the Crees made a sort of stand, about fifty of them were killed. It is a matter of fact that in the confusion and excitement of the pursuit, some of the Blackfeet were killed by their own friends, while Crees, mingling with the Blackfeet, escaped. Finally the Crees reached a clump of trees immediately in front of the present entrance of the Galt mine(the residence of Mr. E. T. Galt, general manager of the Alberta Railway and Coal Company, now stands on this spot,), and having abandoned most of their horses, took refuge there, and made a last stand. The Blackfeet collected all the horses and virtually surrounded the place.

Such was the great battle of the fall of '70. Cairns of stones along theedge of the ravines mark to this day the place where the Blackfeet braves fell. It is difficult to estimate the loss of the Crees, on account of so many having been killed in the river, and their bodies swept away by the current, but it is certain that it was betwen two and three hundred. About forty Blackfeet were killed and fifty wounded.

The following year the Crees sent tobacco to the Blackfeet and in the fall a formal treaty of peace was made between the two nations on the Red Deer River.

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Another type of trickster is the mischievous spirit of the Northern Indians known as Wah-Sak-O-Jak. This spirit is able to assume the shape of any or all the animals. This gift, of course, makes him a master prankster.

One time Wah-Sak-O-Jak was out hunting with Muskwa, the bear. They had been hunting for days and so unsuccessfully that they were beginning to eye each other suspiciously. Finally Wah-Sak-O-Jak began to rub the juice of wild cranberries into his eyes. He explained to the bear that the juice made his eyes bright and keen. The bear tried it and was temporarily blinded; whereupon Wah-Sak-O-Jak grabbed his tomahawk, whacked him over the head, skinned and ate him.

When Wah-Sak-O-Jak had finished his meal his stomach was greatly distended, so he went to a birch tree that was growing with a double trunk. He squeezed in between the two trunks and commanded the tree to close up and press his stomach back to normal. The tree, however, closed so tightly that Wah-Sak-O-Jak was held prisoner until he grew so thin that he was able to squeeze out.

Wah-Sak-O-Jak was terribly angry. He went and got a long switch and gave that tree a vicious beating. You can still see the marks of the beating on the trunk of any birch tree.

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moving up above our reach, where we couldn't get at them. You never saw anything like it, believe me!

"But the worse was yet to come. The first cold snap lasted until along in January. Then we had the usual January thaw. But this thaw hadn't got good and started when a big freeze set in one night and froze the ground so quick and so hard that it popped the rabbits and gophers out of their holes, the way a little boy might pop peas out of the pod. I tell you it was a corker!"

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